UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE	57-05	9/14/05

REVISED VERSION OF THE FSIS HANDOUT, "NOTICE TO GIVE ESTABLISHMENT MANAGEMENT WHEN CERTAIN REGULATORY SAMPLES ARE TAKEN"

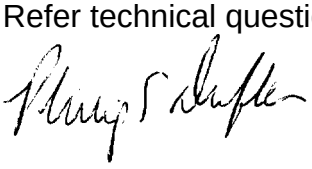
The purpose of this FSIS notice is to let inspection program personnel know that the handout provided to establishment management when FSIS conducts sampling of specific products has been revised. This handout now includes information to notify establishments about the possibility that samples may be tested for threat agents.

Included in sample supply boxes is the handout, "Notice To Give Establishment Management When Certain Regulatory Samples Are Taken." The purpose of the handout is to encourage establishment management to hold product from commerce that it determines to be represented by the sample (i.e., sampled lot). Inspection program personnel are to give establishment management a copy of the handout each time a FSIS regulatory sample is collected for ready-to-eat meat, poultry, or egg products or raw ground beef products.

Because FSIS is conducting random tests for possible threat agents on samples of FSIS-inspected product that are sent to the laboratory for microbial testing, the Agency has revised the handout to make establishments aware of the threat agent testing. The revised handout (see attachment) informs establishment management that:

1. FSIS may conduct tests of certain FSIS inspected product for possible threat agents,
2. the timeframe for analyzing the sample for a possible threat agent is the same as the current timeframe for microbiological sampling,
3. FSIS will report the findings for all analyses on the sample in one response,
4. no response from FSIS regarding a negative result for a threat agent equals a negative finding for the threat agent sampling (i.e., FSIS may opt not to report to the establishment that the sample was analyzed for a threat agent).

Refer technical questions to the Technical Service Center at 1-800-233-3935.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy, Program, and Employee Development

DISTRIBUTION: Inspection Offices; T/A Inspectors; Plant Mgt; T/A Plant Mgt; ABB; PRD; Import Offices	NOTICE EXPIRES: 10/1/06	OPI: OPPED

Attachment

Notice to Give Establishment Management When Certain Regulatory Samples are Taken

To Establishment Manager:

The inspector will be taking a sample of your ready-to-eat meat, poultry, or egg product or raw ground beef product to be tested for microbial hazards. Sampling is one component of verifying your food safety system.

In addition, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) conducts tests of FSIS-inspected product for possible threat agents. This sample may be analyzed for a threat agent. The timeframe for analyzing the sample for a possible threat agent will be the same as the current timeframe for microbiological sampling. FSIS will report the findings for all analyses on the sample in one response, i.e., the establishment will not receive sample results indicating a negative or positive for a pathogen and then later receive confirmation that the sample was negative or positive for the threat agent. No response from FSIS regarding the threat agent sample result equals a negative for the threat agent sampling.

To protect the public health and to avoid the negative impact of a recall, FSIS strongly recommends that you hold all product represented by the sample until results are obtained.

Most negative results are available within 2-6 days; confirmed positive results may take up to 8 days. Results will be provided to you by the inspector or the District Office. For results of future samples, you can receive results by e-mail (contact your District Office for a copy of FSIS Form 10,230-2).

If a test result is positive for either the microbial contaminant or threat agent, and you have distributed the product, FSIS will request that you conduct a recall. If a recall is needed, FSIS expects you to initiate the recall in a timely fashion, usually the same day. (See FSIS Directive 8080.1, Revision 4, for further details.)

It is your responsibility to determine the amount of product represented by the sample. For more information, see FSIS Directives 10240.4, and 10,010.1, Revision 1 and accompanying Questions and Answers.

FSIS may determine that more product or less product than that produced in the establishment-defined lot is represented by the sample based on a review of the support rationale for how the production lot was defined. In making this determination, FSIS will consider such factors as the establishment's coding of product; the pathogen of concern; the processing and packaging; the equipment; the establishment's testing under its food safety system; the establishment's HACCP plan monitoring and verification activities performed in accordance with 417.2 and 417.4; Sanitation SOP records as required in 416.16; and whether some or all of the products controlled by the same or substantially similar HACCP plans have been affected.